

DOCTOR · WHO

THE BATTLE OF READING GAOL

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1897

IN READING GAOL, BY READING TOWN, RESIDES PRISONER G.J.B...

'I NEVER SAW A MAN WHO LOOKED WITH SUCH A WISTFUL EYE...'

...THE FAMOUS PLAYWRIGHT OSCAR WILDE, IMPRISONED AFTER A TERRIBLE SCANDAL!

GOO-EE!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF ICARUS AND DAEDALUS...?!

'...UPON THAT LITTLE TENT OF BLUE WHICH PRISONERS CALL THE SKY!'

I'M THE DOCTOR - AND THIS IS A JAILBREAK!

SO STAND BACK FROM THE WINDOW!

SQUEE!

SQUEE!

SQUEE!

WEEEEE!



HOLD THAT CAREFULLY - DROP IT AND YOU'LL MAKE UP HALF OF BERKSHIRE.

BUT... BUT...

...IS WHAT GOATS DO, BIG FELLA.

'ALRIGHT, I S'POSE WE'VE GOT TIME FOR A RECAP...

'A SWARM OF BATS IN LONDON LED ME AND MY LOVELY ASSISTANT, ROSE, TO THE LYCEUM THEATRE, WHERE AUTHOR JERAM STOKER WAS BEING MENACED BY A COUNT NAMED DRACULA...'

'SEE LAST ISSUE - ED.'

'ONLY IT TURNS OUT DRACULA ISN'T A VAMPIRE, LIKE STOKER'S NEW BOOK CLAIMS - IT'S BRAM'S NUSSUS WHO SUCKS BLOOD TO SURVIVE

'HER NAME'S FLORENCE. RING ANY BELLS?'

FLORENCE. O, THE DIVINE FLORENCE...

MY FIRST LOVE, BACK IN IRELAND - MORE THAN 20 YEARS AGO!

YOU KNOW, DON'T YOU?

'BOUT YOUR VAMPIRISM? YEP, SHE SAYS THE ONLY CURE IS TO KILL THE VAMPIRE THAT MADE HER ONE...

YOU.

SO YOU PRESUME TO KILL ME? HA! HA! HA!

MARVELLOUS! I'VE NOT LAUGHED SO HARD IN THE TWO LONG YEARS I'VE BEEN CONFINED AT HER MAJESTY'S PLEASURE!

DON'T BE DAFT...

RECKON I CAN CURE YOU IF WE CAN BREAK OUT. ONLY MY TARDIS WOULDN'T FIT IN THIS CELL, AND FLORENCE'S BATS CAN'T TAKE YOUR WEIGHT, SO WE LEAVE THE HARD WAY - BY THE FRONT DOOR!

DON'T WORRY - SOMEONE'S GONNA DISTRACT THE GUARDS...



...MY LOVELY ASSISTANT
WILL SEE TO THAT!

INSPECTORS OF
PRISONS, BEARING
HER MAJESTY'S
SEAL?

HOW NOVEL -
AND AT SUCH A TIME
OF NIGHT! BUT I
MUST CONCEDE THE
PROPRIETY OF YOUR
AUTHORISATIONS,
MISS TYLER, MRS
STOKER...

GOOD OLD
PSYCHIC
PAPER, NEVER
FAILS...

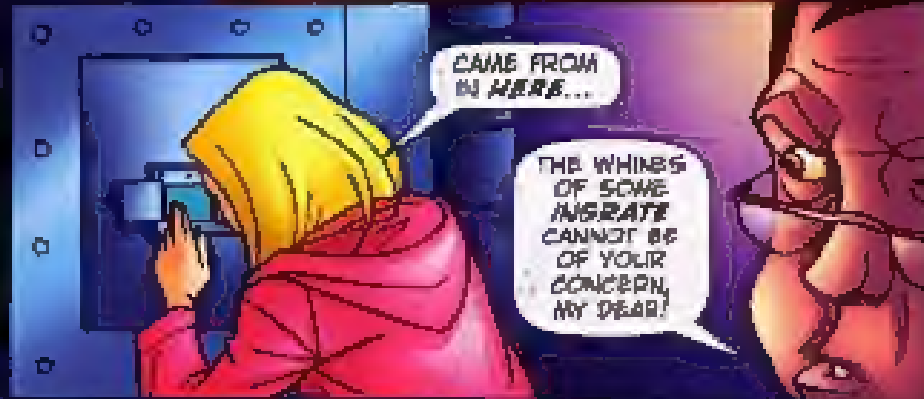


AT READING GAOL, WE'RE
PROUD OF OUR RELAXED
ROUTINE! HARD MANUAL
LABOUR FOR ALL, ONE
HOURS' EXERCISE DAILY...

AND A BOWL
OF GRUEL
EVERY
LUNCHTIME!

HELP!
PLEASE,
WON'T
SOMEBODY
HELP?

FLORENCE
- DID YOU
JUST HEAR
SOMETHING?



CAME FROM
IN HERE...

THE WHIMS
OF SOME
INGRATE
CANNOT BE
OF YOUR
CONCERN,
MY DEAR!



IT'S MY
BROTHER.
HE'S NOT
WELL...

PLEASE,
HE CAN'T
WAIT TILL
MORNING.



KIDS! YOU
KEEP KIDS
LOCKED UP?

OPEN THAT
DOOR - NOW!

WE KEEP CRIMINALS
LOCKED UP, THESE
ORPHANED TYKES
WERE CAUGHT
SNARING RABBITS...

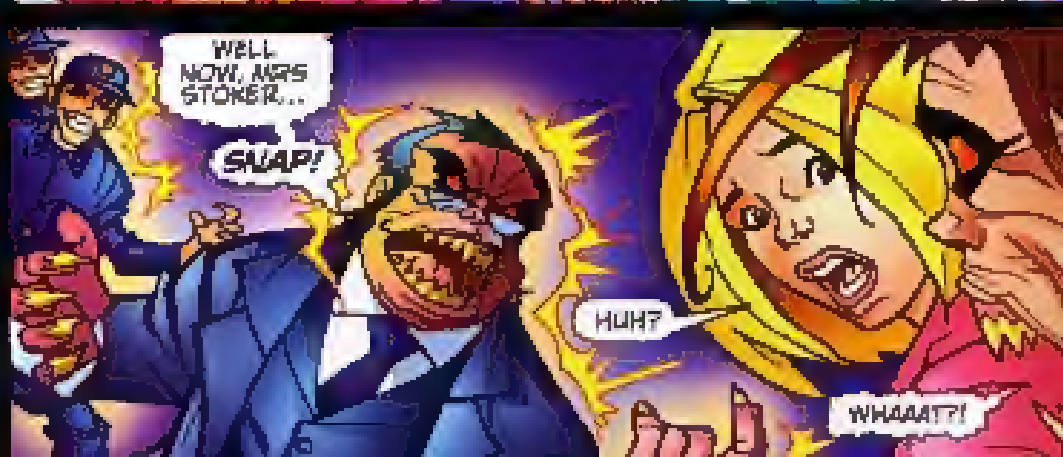
NOT ONE OR TWO,
BUT THREE -
CAN YOU BELIEVE
IT, MISS?



FLORENCE, THE
DIVERSION
THE DOCTOR
WANTED...

NOW'S
THE TIME!

MY
THOUGHTS
REACTIVELY,
ROSE...



WELL
NOW, MRS
STOKER...

SNAP!

HUH?

WHAAAT?!

SOON AFTER...

SO WHERE IS YOUR LOVELY ASSISTANT WITH HER DISTRACTION?

COMING I HOPE...

TELL US, OSCAR - WERE YOU BORN WITH FANGS AND THAT, OR WERE YOU MADE?

'T WAS NEITHER NURTURE NOR NATURE, BUT SUPERNATURE!

'AT OXFORD, I ATTENDED A SEANCE, A PARTY TO BRING FORTH SPIRITS. A KNOCK CAME FROM THE DOOR, AND A STRANGE SHINING CREATURE ENTERED...

SINCE, I'VE HAD SUCH UNNATURAL URGES - TO KILL OR TURN THE THINGS I LOVE. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE LIKE?

OH YEAH. THAT SHINING CREATURE WAS AN ALIEN PROBE, SAILING THE THOUGHT WAVES... AN EXPLORER, DRAWN TO THE SEANCE.

A B-BEACON? SIGNALLING WHAT?

'HUNGRY? THIRSTY? FILL UP ON THIS PLANET, HERE!

HEY, WHO'S THAT?

'SHE DRANK HER FILL OF MY FELLOWS, KILLED THEM... BUT SHE PUT ONLY THE WOUNDS OF LOVE ON ME.'

IT FILLED ITS TANKS WITH YOUR FRIENDS' BLOOD, THEN MADE YOU A BEACON.

THE PRISON DOCTOR, A FOUL FELLOW WHO CARRIES OUT INVASIVE PROCEDURES ON MY PERSON!

EXPERIMENTS. HE NOTES EACH NEW AND NERVE-TWITCHED POSE...

NASTY. GIMON, WE'LL HIDE OUT IN HIS SURGERY - FIND OUT WHY WHILE WE WAIT FOR ROSE!

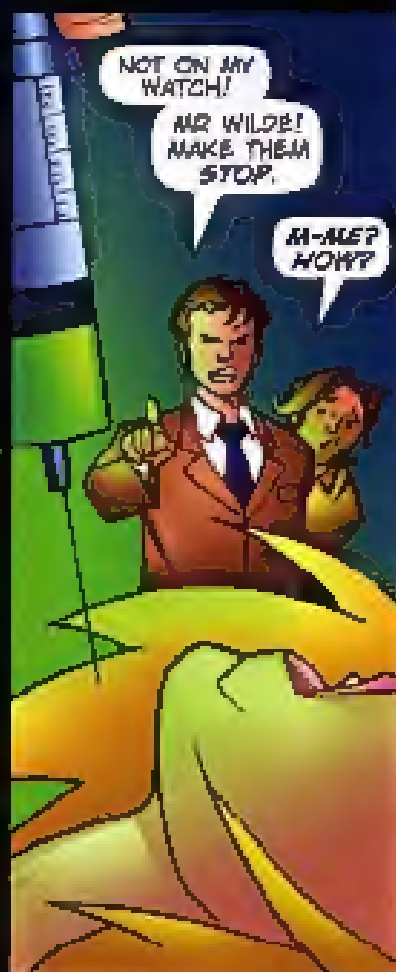
BUT...

ROSE?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT DISTRACTION?

SORRY ABOUT THAT, COULD DO WITH ONE MYSELF...

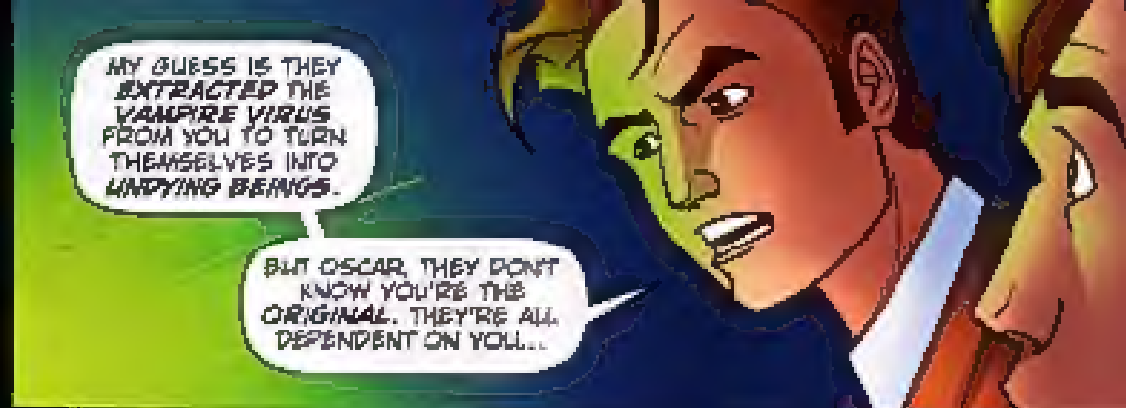
THEY'RE GONNA MAKE ME A VAMPIRE!



NOT ON MY WATCH!

MR WILDE!
MAKE THEM STOP.

M-ME?
HOW?



MY GUESS IS THEY
EXTRACTED THE
VAMPIRE VIRUS
FROM YOU TO TURN
THEMSELVES INTO
UNDYING BEINGS.

BUT OSCAR, THEY DON'T
KNOW YOU'RE THE
ORIGINAL. THEY'RE ALL
DEPENDENT ON YOU...



ALL
YOU'VE
GOT TO
DO IS...

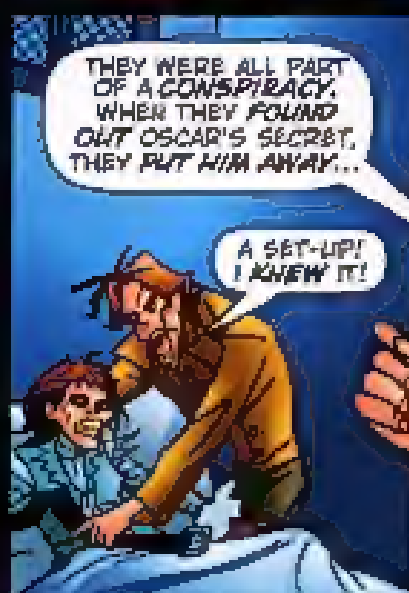
BE
BUTEN.

I COMMAND
YOU TO
STOP!



NICE ONE. BUT
I WISH I KNEW
WHAT THEIR
PLAN WAS...

YOU
HAVEN'T
WORKED
IT OUT?

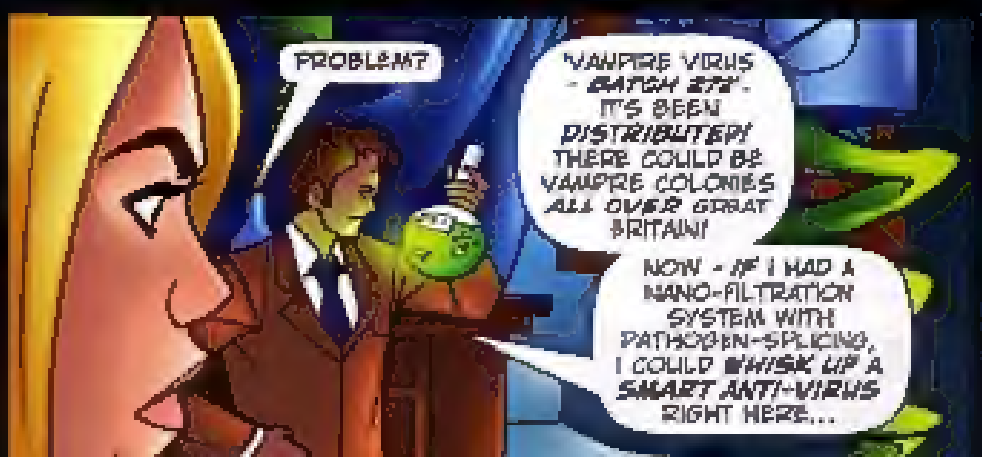


THEY WERE ALL PART
OF A CONSPIRACY.
WHEN THEY FOUND
OUT OSCAR'S SECRET,
THEY PUT HIM AWAY...

A SET-UP!
I KNEW IT!



AN ONCE THEY'D
SYNTHESIZED
THE VIRUS, THEY
COULD CREATE
ARMIES OF VAMP
SOLDIERS!



PROBLEM?

'VAMPIRE VIRUS
- BATCH 27'.
IT'S BEEN
DISTRIBUTED!
THERE COULD BE
VAMPIRE COLONIES
ALL OVER GREAT
BRITAIN!

NOW - IF I HAD A
NANO-FILTRATION
SYSTEM WITH
PATHOGEN-SPLICING,
I COULD WHISK UP A
SMART ANTI-VIRUS
RIGHT HERE...



BUT I
HAVEN'T,
SO...

DOWN
THE
HATCH!

WHAT'VE YOU DONE?

IT'S - URRH!
- A-ALRIGHT,
ROSE,
PROMISE...

I'M IMMUNISED.
EVERY TIME
LORD WAS. WE
GOT A-ANTI-
VAMPIRE
SERUM ALONG
WITH THE MUR!

AND ABOUT,
SOMETHING
STRANGE
IS -

UUUUURRRRPP!

SKASSSH!

I'M CHANGING
BACK! I'M
NORMAL AGAIN!

HOW DID
YOU DO
THAT?

MY BODY'S ANTIGENS
REFUSED THE VIRUS.
I THOUGHT I'D HAVE
TO DRAW IT FROM MY
BLOOD AND INJECT IT
INTO THEM...

BUT THIS IS
A LOT LESS
MESSY.

OKAY, SO IT'S A SMART
ANTIVIRUS - IT'LL SEEK
OUT AND CURE ANY
REMAINING VAMPIRES IN
THE COUNTRY...

ALL WE'VE GOTTA
DO IS PRODUCE
ENOUGH OF IT.
OSCAR, FLORENCE
- BURP! BURP!
TO SAVE THE
WORLD!

NEXT DAY...

TO FEEL THE
LIGHT OF THE
SUN AFTER
20 YEARS IN
DARKNESS...

THESE ORPHANS
TOO, SHALL KNOW
A BRIGHTER DAY.
ROYALTES FROM
'DRACULA' SHALL
SEE TO THAT!

CHEERS,
BRAM
APPRECIATE IT!

WHAT'S NEXT
FOR YOU,
OSCAR?

EXILE TO
PARIS, I
FEAR. I MAY
BE FREE,
BUT I AM AN
UNWELCOME
VISITANT
TO A WORLD
THAT DOES
NOT WANT
ME...

HORRIBLE AS ARE
THE DEAD WHEN THEY
RISE FROM THEIR
TOMBS, THE LIVING
WHO COME OUT FROM
TOMBS ARE MORE
HORRIBLE STILL.

GOOD LUCK, AND
WHEN YOU GET TO
FRENCH PASSPORT
CONTROL, DON'T FORGET
TO SAY - 'I HAVE NOTHING
TO DECLARE BUT MY
GENIUS!'

BUT - YOU
QUOTE MY OWN
WORDS!

DO IT? YOU KNOW WHAT
THEY SAY: 'TALENT
BORROWS, GENIUS
STEALS!'

AND THAT'S
MINE, TOO!

EXACTLY!

A NEW ADVENTURE STARTS NEXT ISSUE!